UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

minMAX Electroacoustic Orchestra: Simple Beginnings

2026 University of Toronto New Music Festival
Norbert Palej, *festival coordinator*
Anthony Gunadi, *artistic director*
Elienna Wang, *executive director*

Sunday, January 25th, 2026 at 7:30pm | Walter Hall, 80 Queen's Park

PROGRAM

Sur la Terrasse (2025)
Zane Shihadeh (b. 2005)

Fervent (2025)
Pari Bahrami (b. 2004)

Lost in the City (2025)
Daniel Wang Gomes (b. 2004)

Lefthand Woman (2025)
Jordan Middleton (b. 2005)

Intermission

Walks, Thoughts (2025)
Jeanne Tsui (b. 2004)

Sister Boils Carrots Under a Leaking Roof (2025)
Elienna Wang (b. 2004)

Simple Beginnings (2025)
Anthony Gunadi (b. 2004)

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years, it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

As part of the Faculty's commitment to improving Indigenous inclusion, we call upon all members of our community to start/continue their personal journeys towards understanding and acknowledging Indigenous peoples' histories, truths and cultures.
Visit indigenous.utoronto.ca to learn more.

MINMAX ELECTROACOUSTIC ORCHESTRA

Shawn Bennett	*conductor*
Anwen Robertson	*flute*
Jordan Middleton	*flute, soprano saxophone, alto saxophone*
Dominik Kosciolek	*clarinet, alto saxophone*
Fabian Nunez Ramos	*clarinet, tenor saxophone*
Chantelle Tom-Ying	*soprano saxophone, tenor saxophone*
Vaughn Hall	*alto saxophone*
Min Gu Kang	*baritone saxophone*
Dylan Pilcher	*trumpet*
Miles Kobayashi	*trumpet*
Joseph Funk	*trumpet*
Kenzie Ford	*trombone*
Jack Shiels	*tuba*
Zane Shihadeh	*piano, synth keyboard*
Daniel Zhou	*piano*
Jingren Sun	*piano*
Jeanne Tsui	*midi keyboard*
Bjorn Kriel	*percussion, synth keyboard*
Thomas Carli	*percussion*
Jeffrey Zhu	*percussion*
Jon Bilek	*percussion*
Will Bentley	*percussion*
Giuliana Barrow Lattanzio	*soprano vocal*
Vincent Poon	*violin*
Mobin Naeini	*viola*
Tomas Peña	*cello*
Benjamin Kemppainen	*double bass*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Thanks to Zane Shihadeh for helping with stage management.

PROGRAM NOTES

Sur la Terrasse

Sur la Terrasse is a contemporary dance piece that uses a hybrid of fixed electronics and live instruments. The text heard in the piece invites the listener to see the world in a new light without passion. The opening's dissonant and irregular sonority represents the entrance into a strange and unfamiliar landscape. The middle and end sections signify the breakthrough into a world of dance and movement with detailed interplay between the electronics and live ensemble.

Fervent

This piece is inspired by the Persian song *Mara Ashegh* مرا عاشق (*I Must Be a Lover*), composed by Parviz Meshkatiyan and based on Rumi's *Divan-e Shams* (*Ghazal No. 574*). The song, heard at both the beginning and end of the work, employs a hypnotic 7/8 rhythm that creates a dreamlike flow. This rhythmic foundation shapes the opening of my composition. Beyond its musical qualities, the song resonates with me on a deeply personal level. It is tied to my memories of Iran, where I often listened to it in my painting class before immigrating to Canada. The song feels like a souvenir from the past, framed in memory. At times, I want to break that frame to escape the pain of belonging to two places at once, splitting love between cultures, missing old friends and familiar moments. Sometimes the weight of this duality feels overwhelming, even maddening. Yet the frame never breaks.

Lost in the City

Lost in the City is a meditation on city life, conflicting identities, and self-discovery in an urban world that is ever-changing. Much like ourselves, cars pass by at lightning speeds and stop at intersections; enjoying a brief moment of respite before a new direction is chosen and the rush begins again. This piece uses electroacoustic sound alongside the band, and takes us through the journey of city life that we all participate in, and tries to make sense of the chaos.

Lefthand Woman

Lefthand Woman is, by its nature, an international piece of music. The idea came to me while I was visiting Shanghai, shortly after I listened to Wayne Shorter's album *High Life* for the first time. I figured out some sketches on the piano, and then began fleshing out the whole piece upon returning to Canada. In my songs, I like to completely switch up the style for the last section of the piece, so make sure to listen out for that. And finally, special thanks to my lovely girlfriend for coming up with the name for this song!

Walks, Thoughts

This piece is inspired by aimless walking, a state in which thoughts are allowed to evolve freely rather than being forced into resolution. Most of the musical materials are inspired by Cantonese characters, the primary language in which I formulate my thoughts. The Cantonese character 思 ("to think", pronounced si) is chosen. It transforms into new meanings (史, 試, 時, 市, 事) as its tone changes, mirroring the shifting and surprising nature of thought. This piece incorporates these characters through recorded writing sounds, musical gestures inspired by their strokes, and as the source of improvisatory passages.

Sister Boils Carrots Under a Leaking Roof

Sister Boils Carrots Under a Leaking Roof is inspired by my grandma's story of growing up in the Ganyu district of China. As a teenage girl of a peasant family of six children, she carried the hands and spirit it takes to help her family care for the house, the garden, her siblings, and, later on, her children and grandchildren. She reminds me of the rain of the Meiyu season, with its lively roars of thunder and lightning, its grassy taste of crops and animals, and its incessant prayer for the food to be full on the dinner table.

Simple Beginnings

Let go. Return to your default settings.
In my piece, performers can add their own personal flair when prompted to freely improvise or embellish certain lines. *Simple Beginnings* for me is about letting my authentic voice speak by reflecting on my musical past and consolidating it with what I have learned up to this day.

BIOGRAPHIES

Zane Shihadeh's compositional repertoire stretches from neoclassical music to modern jazz, to film composition. His award-winning works have helped him into studying with several renowned faculty from the University of Toronto including Tania Gill and Larysa Kuzmenko. Now in his 3rd year of undergraduate studies, Shihadeh is continuing to pursue and develop his compositional craft by exploring varying genres including impressionism, neoclassical, scores for film and theater productions, and modern jazz. After graduating from university, Shihadeh wishes to continue his compositional ambitions, specifically in the realm of storytelling.

Pari Bahrami is a composer and musician based in Canada, originally from Iran. Growing up immersed in the rich cultural heritage of her homeland, she developed a deep connection to music from an early age, particularly through her study of the piano. Her passion for music led her to pursue higher education in composition at the University of Toronto. Her compositions and performances reflect a deep commitment to exploring the expressive possibilities of diverse musical forms. Her work has been performed by ensembles around the world, showcasing her unique voice and artistic vision.

Daniel Wang Gomes is a composer who found his passion for music through video games and other media. Having first discovered his love for editing, animation, poetry and video games, Daniel eventually found his love for music through making music videos and soundtracks. He aims to bring influences from multiple sources, whether that is through combining genres, writing programmatically, or by creating multimedia works. Daniel is currently studying composition with Christos Hatzis, and is set on completing his BMus this academic year. His music is influenced by postmodern eclecticism, and he combines his contemporary and classical influences with jazz, electronic dance music and pop. He has made music for video games, concert works and film.

Hailing from High River, Alberta, **Jordan Middleton** is an ambitious performer and composer currently studying under U of T's jazz faculty. Jordan is used to testing his limits as a composer, writing songs in a wide variety of genres, resulting in a personal repertoire that concisely states his own musical voice. With his newest piece, "Lefthand Woman," he continues to broaden his horizons while paying homage to the sole inspiration for the piece, Wayne Shorter.

Jeanne Tsui, born in Hong Kong, is currently pursuing a degree in composition at the University of Toronto under the guidance of Diana Soh. Her work is driven by everyday observations and a fascination with sound as narrative—capturing the seemingly mundane and reimagining it through rhythm, timbre, and gesture. With a background in handbell ringing, she strives to bridge the gap between handbell music and contemporary composition. Most recently, her work was performed by the Marco Polo Orchestra in Italy as part of the Veneto Art and Music Summit.

Elienna Wang is a Toronto-based composer and art administrator. Her concert music has been performed by the Toronto Saxophone Collective, the Kupenta Singers, the Spirit Singers, as well as workshopped in reading sessions by the Bedford Trio, the MacMillan Singers, the Elmer Isler Singers, the University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and Imani Winds. As a media composer for video games and film, she has collaborated with computer science students at the University of Toronto and artists from Sheridan College, Centennial College, and OCAD University, which culminated in presentations at the 2025 Canadian National Exhibition and 2025 Level Up Showcase.

Anthony Gunadi is a Canadian composer whose work spans concert music, video game audio, music education, and interdisciplinary collaboration. He is the co-founder of the minMAX Electroacoustic Orchestra, a video game composer and sound designer for Hiro and Team Hami, and a piano teacher. His achievements include 1st Place Achievement in Audio at the 2025 Level Up Student Showcase, the 2023-24 Orchestra Toronto Prize in Composition, and 2023-24 University of Toronto Piano Trio Composition Competition. He is currently completing his fourth year of undergraduate composition studies in Norbert Palej's studio at the University of Toronto.